

The atlas consists of pages of micrographs alternating with pages of descriptive text directly relevant to each micrograph. The micrographs are mostly of reasonable quality and number about three per page. There are generally sufficient numbers of illustrations to cover each topic from low power to high power light micrographs, although some subjects are inadequately covered, for example the lymphoid tissues. Good quality electron micrographs are included in the sections on tissues, although many are too small to be of much use, because of the restrictions inevitably imposed by the size of a pocket book.

There is a paucity of electron micrographs in the parts of the atlas devoted to the systems. For example, the ultrastructure of the kidney and lung, now commonly taught in medical schools, is not included. There is little or no indication as to whether material used in the micrographs is human or animal. In addition, although much of the staining is of reasonable quality, examples of haematoxylin and eosin-stained material are not always included for each organ and tissue. These are shortcomings of the atlas considering its intended use by undergraduate students in the interpretation of slides.

The text suffers in translation. Its descriptions of micrographs include the irritating use of the first person 'In this figure we see. . .'. Throughout, the text is inconsistent in the use of Latin or English names. For example, titles of subjects may involve Latin alone e.g. 'Omentum majus', or English alone e.g. 'Skin' or both e.g. 'Seminal Vesicle-Vesicula Seminalis' or by change in languages e.g. 'Aorta Descendens' later 'Descending Aorta'. The use of certain Latin terms is unfamiliar and complex, for example 'stratum longitudinale of the tunica muscularis'.

The text also suffers from insufficient explanation in its attempt to remain an atlas and not a textbook. For example, secondary follicles are mentioned in lymph nodes without reference to primary follicles.

Some subjects are out of date. The classical liver lobule from a non-human source is illustrated, with no mention of acini. In addition, the regular use of the word 'ergastoplasm' is rather antiquated.

In conclusion, there are other histological atlases on the market which are more appropriate and more useful to undergraduate students.

MARILYN M. JONES

Atlas of the Central Nervous System in Man. 3rd edition. By RICHARD A. MILLER and ETHEL BURACK. (Pp. xii + 169; 81 figures; U.S. \$25.25.) Baltimore and London: Williams & Wilkins. 1982.

This atlas contains more than 80 black and white half-tone illustrations of Weigert preparations of sections through the central nervous system. The transverse and sagittal series illustrate the central region of each section whereas the horizontal sections, new to this edition, show the complete brain. The illustrations are labelled only by numbers which give little help in the identification of the structure: just over three hundred structures are identified in this way and thus these labels offer a valuable mechanism for the revision of the subject. There is an accompanying descriptive text, arranged on the facing page to each illustration; this text, when read consecutively, gives a comprehensive account of the structures within the brain and spinal cord. The standard of both text and labels is more advanced than that achieved by all but a few British medical students today, and thus the book will appeal principally to professional neuro-anatomists and to science degree students. It is therefore all the more surprising that there are no references to published work nor are there any suggestions for further reading.

A. J. PALFREY

Multiple Choice Questions in Histology. By RAYMOND COLEMAN. (Pp. ix + 285; 43 drawings; 39 tables; £5.95.) London: Pitman. 1983.

This pocket-size book contains 626 groups of five questions of the 'single true-false' type; 43 drawings with pointers; and 39 two-way tables with squares to be filled in. The second half of the book is devoted to succinct explanations of appropriate answers.

Dr Coleman is Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine at The Technion-Israel Institute of Morphology, where his students 'were the guinea-pigs for many of the questions'. His book offers a broad cover of histology, and the standard is not too exacting. About 25 of the questions could be challenged, more on grounds of construction than of fact. Ingenious students may be

able to add to this number. (I recall setting a question with the stem: 'The following nerve supplies the skin between the first and second toes', and five suggestions. One student merely wrote 'there is no skin between the first and second toes'.)

As it stands, the merits of the book so far outweigh its faults that it can be safely recommended.

M. J. T. FITZGERALD

Anatomy of the Foot and Ankle. Descriptive, Topographic, Functional. By S. K. SARRAFIAN. (Pp. xiv + 433; many illustrations; £76.00.) Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott. 1983.

This book is an extremely detailed account of the descriptive anatomy of the ankle and foot presented in systematic fashion. Such a tome might seem an anachronism, but the author is an orthopaedic surgeon who stresses the need for finely detailed anatomical knowledge in his own field, particularly with the advent of microsurgery. It is chastening that the traditional core of the science of anatomy – detailed topography – seems to be passing from the grasp of professional anatomists into the hands of surgeons.

The book has no pretensions as a strictly original study but instead is an encyclopaedic review of the vast literature, complemented by a great number of new dissections performed entirely by the author and illustrated mainly with black and white photographs (with some colour superimposed in the vascular system), some diagrams, and a few reproductions from original sources. The whole venture was very much a family affair: the dissections were performed in the author's basement and photography was by his wife and sons. This might suggest a rather amateurish effort but the book is, in fact, highly professional and the black and white photographs are informative and of excellent clarity; colour would have added little except expense. The great body of the book is descriptive gross anatomy but it terminates with a chapter on function, which is a brave effort at synthesising the confusing literature.

If adverse comments are to be made, the main one would be that there is a certain lack of critical assessment of the literature, which is all served up to the reader regardless of relative importance and significance. This is particularly evident in the chapter on functional anatomy where an attempt is made to reconcile views, which are often conflicting and sometimes almost certainly untrue, in one overall synthesis. Another flaw is that literature with a comparative bias has been largely ignored, yet it is here that important facets of human anatomy have often been highlighted or put in perspective. An extreme version of this narrow viewpoint, which will rouse the ire of older British anatomists, is given by Hampar Kelikan in the foreword where he dismisses Wood Jones' *Structure and Function as Seen in the Foot* with the following words: "The author of this book, following the tradition of his predecessor, Sir Arthur Keith, gave surgeons a friendly wink and went meandering in his wanted territory: comparative anatomy." It must be said that Sarrafian himself does not seem to share this view, yet he has largely neglected a significant source of illuminating data.

This book, which must have presented the author with a daunting task, is destined to remain the definitive work on this region for many years.

O. J. LEWIS

A Colour Atlas of Foot and Ankle Anatomy. By R. M. H. McMINN, R. T. HUTCHINGS and B. M. LOGAN. (Pp. 96; many illustrations; £12.00.) London: Wolfe Medical Publications. 1982.

This atlas is really an offshoot of the whole body atlas by McMinn & Hutchings, has the same format, and is directed, according to the preface, at those with a special interest in the foot – medical practitioners and students, orthopaedic surgeons, podiatrists, chiropractors, dancers, athletes, etc. Many more illustrations are presented on this restricted field than in the parent atlas, which set high standards for colour reproduction of anatomical material; surprisingly some of the plates in this new book are less satisfactory. Even more inexplicably there are a considerable number of lapses from accuracy in identification, or failure to identify (or even dissect) well recognized structures. Paradoxically the parent atlas, even with its very restricted coverage of the region, is sometimes more precise.

In short this book caters adequately for the needs of the paramedicals mentioned in the preface, particularly those without access to dissected material. It will not satisfy the specialist seeking a detailed and accurate exposition of this restricted anatomical field.

O. J. LEWIS